

NEWS RELEASE

**U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Mountain-Prairie Region
134 Union Boulevard
Lakewood, Colorado 80228**

**For Release on:
August 18, 2009**

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Fish and Wildlife Service to Conduct Status Reviews for 29 Species

Following a review of a petition seeking to protect 206 species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has determined that 29 of the petitioned species may warrant Federal protection. The Service will undertake a more thorough review of these species to determine whether to propose adding them to the Federal list of threatened and endangered wildlife and plants. The Service also determined that the petition did not present substantial information that listing may be warranted for 9 other species.

The 38 species addressed in this finding are found in Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, Montana, North Dakota, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

The list of the petitioned species can be found in the *Federal Register* notice published today or at the Service's web site at <http://www.fws.gov/mountain-prairie/endspp/news.htm>

The request to list these 38 species was part of a petition submitted by WildEarth Guardians to list 206 species. On February 5, 2009, the Service made a determination that the petition did not provide substantial information that listing may be warranted for 165 of the petitioned species.

Two of the 206 petitioned plant species, the pinnate spring-parsley and the Diamond Valley suncup, were addressed in a petition finding for 475 Southwestern species which published on January 6, 2009. The Service determined the petition did not provide substantial information that listing the two plants was warranted.

One additional species, the Gierisch mallow, has been added to the list of candidate species, and will be proposed for listing when funding is available.

Today's decision, commonly known as a 90-day finding, is based on scientific information about the species provided in the petition. The petition finding does not mean that the Service has decided it is appropriate to give the 29 species Federal protection under the ESA. Rather, this finding is the first step in a long process that triggers a more thorough review of all the biological information available.

To ensure this review is comprehensive, the Service is soliciting information from State and Federal natural resource agencies and all interested parties regarding the species' historical and current status and distribution, their biology and ecology, ongoing conservation measures for the species and their habitats, and impacts to the species and their habitats.

Comments and information will be accepted until October 19, 2009 and can be submitted electronically via the Federal eRulemaking Portal at: <http://www.regulations.gov>, or can be mailed or hand delivered to Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS-R6-ES-2008-0111; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222; Arlington, VA 22203.

Petitions are formal requests to give a species ESA protection as either threatened or endangered. The Service reviews the information contained in the petition and other scientific information in our files to determine if further analysis is needed.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov

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